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RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI IMMEDIATE 7101
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 5024
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE 0496
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IMMEDIATE 9299
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE 7164
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 2622
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 8997
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE 1474
RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH IMMEDIATE 8114
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY IMMEDIATE 0985
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 8011
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE 8768
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 5107
RUEHUM/AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR IMMEDIATE 6151
RUEHVN/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE 3243
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE 5600
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
INFO RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 STATE 074383

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [ARF](#) [ASEAN](#) [KNNP](#) [PARM](#)

SUBJECT: ACTION REQUEST: UPDATING ARF ON REGIONAL DISASTER
PREPAREDNESS

REF: A. STATE 64400 B. STATE 59706 C. FOLEY-EMBASSY
EMAILS

¶1. (U) This is an ACTION REQUEST for Embassies BANGKOK, BEIJING, CANBERRA, COLOMBO, DILI, DHAKA, HANOI, ISLAMABAD, JAKARTA, KUALA LUMPUR, MANILA, MOSCOW, NEW DELHI, OTTAWA, PORT MORESBY, PHNOM PENH, SEOUL, SINGAPORE, TOKYO, ULAANBATT, USEU BRUSSELS, VIENTIANE, WELLINGTON.

SUMMARY

¶2. (U) Department requests that posts seek host government views on the inclusion of strong language focused on regional disaster preparedness in the upcoming ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Chairman's Statement. Many governments agreed with the elements of the original U.S. proposal for a stand-alone ARF Ministerial Statement on Regional Disaster Preparedness. (REF A) However, several felt there was too little time to negotiate the text. The U.S. has agreed to the suggestion that this instead be incorporated into the Chairman's Statement. The ARF Chairman's Statement will be issued by the Singapore Chair following the July 24 ARF Ministerial. We expect this section of the Chairman's Statement would express support for further ARF civil-military coordination including multilateral exercises, the further development of an ARF Standby Arrangement System, the creation of an ARF Status of Forces Template (SOFA) for disaster relief, and the creation of a Workplan for Regional Disaster Preparedness. This instructions cable and non-paper updates U.S. views given to some, but not all, ARF countries included on this action request

(ref A). Additionally, the Department requests that Embassy Islamabad follow up with Pakistan regarding their views on two key U.S. proposals pending in ARF.

OBJECTIVES

¶3. (U) Department instructs Embassy to pursue the following objectives with appropriate host government officials:

(For COLOMBO, DILI, DHAKA, ISLAMABAD, KUALA LUMPUR, MOSCOW, PORT MORESBY, PHNOM PENH, ULAANBATT, VIENTIANE)

--Persuade host government that, in response to recent natural disasters in Asia, ARF and its members need to respond appropriately.

--Seek host government support for a section of the ARF Chairman's Statement focused on furthering ARF disaster preparedness efforts.

--Inquire about host governments' reactions to the key elements of the proposed ideas: further civil-military coordination, a revived ARF Standby Arrangement System, an ARF SOFA Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR) Template, and a new ARF Workplan for Regional Disaster

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Preparedness.

(For BANDAR SER, BANGKOK, BEIJING, CANBERRA, HANOI, JAKARTA, MANILA, NEW DELHI, OTTAWA, SEOUL, SINGAPORE, TOKYO, WELLINGTON, USEU BRUSSELS)

--Deliver this latest non-paper, an updated version of the non-paper distributed via ref A. Department would appreciate any further reactions from host governments to the key elements of the proposed language.

(ISLAMABAD only)

--In addition to the above objectives, approach appropriate host government officials about their views on two, key U.S. proposals awaiting their feedback: An ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Nonproliferation and Disarmament and an ARF Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Workplan.

BACKGROUND

Paragraphs 4 and 5 may be delivered as a non-paper to host governments.

¶4. (U) THE UTILITY OF AN ARF RESPONSE TO RECENT EVENTS: When regional security crises arise, ARF needs to respond with appropriate solutions. Recent natural disasters in Burma and China again underscore the need to further prepare for and coordinate multilateral civil and military assistance to affected populations. The region has made progress since the devastating 2004 tsunami and the multilateral assistance that followed. However, further training, technical assistance, and coordination in advance of disasters remain a need. Originating from the mandates of the 2006 ARF Statement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, ARF provides a key venue for this type of cooperation. The United States proposes to enhance ARF's efforts in disaster preparedness in the stages before a disaster strikes. This requires more effective coordination both among ARF members, with ASEAN, and with other regional and UN-system responders.

¶5. (U) Key Elements of a section on regional disaster preparedness in the ARF Chairman's Statement:

--The below information reflects notional ideas the United States would like to see incorporated by Ministers into the 15th ARF Chairman's Statement rather than a separate ARF ministerial statement focused only on disaster preparedness. We welcome the views of ARF members, especially the Singapore Chair, on specific language.

--GREATER CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION: Ministers reinforced their strong support for ARF's continued role in civil-military coordination for disaster responses. In full support and not in place of civilian responses, military assets and personnel have played an increasingly important role in regional disaster responses. ARF civil and military agencies will improve coordinated responses through training, information sharing, and multinational exercises.

--A COMBINED ARF and ASEAN STANDBY ARRANGEMENT SYSTEM:

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Ministers agreed to revive the effort to develop an ARF Standby Arrangement System. A 2006 ARF Statement on Disaster Management approved the development of an ARF Standby Arrangement System (SAS). This effort should be further examined, complement ASEAN's own efforts, and align more closely with the UN and NGO disaster relief system. ARF and ASEAN should also explore how they can further complement, or even combine such arrangements. Further discussion within ARF and ASEAN would also be useful to define the relationship of the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Center with current ARF efforts.

--ARF SOFA HA/DR TEMPLATE: Ministers endorsed the recommendation from the May 1-2 ARF Disaster Relief Desktop Exercise to develop an ARF Status of Forces Arrangements (SOFA) Template for Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR). This pre-written template could be utilized by militaries in the event of disasters and save valuable time in moments of extreme need. The ARF SOFA HA/DR Template would not serve as a multilateral agreement or treaty among ARF militaries to operate on one another's soil. Based on bilateral decisions between assisting and receiving countries, these countries may also not require the use of SOFAs in the event of military assistance to natural disasters. Rather, the template would form the basis for temporary, bilateral arrangements between receiving countries and assisting militaries as they see fit. The ARF SOFA HA/DR Template could be included in future versions of the ARF Strategic Guidance Document for HA/DR. The template should be focused on the short-term deployment of specific military assets toward HA/DR assisting efforts. ARF could also utilize the existing template found in the Oslo Guidelines to form the basis for its draft.

--ARF WORKPLAN FOR REGIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: Ministers endorsed the creation of a new workplan to help coordinate certain ARF-wide or sub-regional training for disaster preparedness. Perhaps initially drafted by one or all of the ARF Disaster Relief Shepherds, the workplan would encompass ARF disaster preparedness activities and sub-regional activities for which members seek ARF assistance. Furthermore, a workplan would more effectively coordinate ARF's interactions other regional and international efforts. The framework for the workplan would be developed next ARF inter-sessional year.

--ARF DISASTER RELIEF EXERCISE: The U.S. and Philippines plan to announce their firm agreement to conduct an ARF Disaster Relief Exercise, termed Voluntary Demonstration of Response, possibly in mid-2009. We hope to give ARF members more information on the exercise during the July 23 ARF Defense Officials Dialogue. We will seek further Ministerial approval of the exercise beyond the recognition given by Ministers at the 14th ARF.

¶6. (SBU) ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND for EMBASSY ISLAMABAD only:
In March 2007, the U.S. proposed the creation of an annual ARF meeting, termed Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Nonproliferation and Disarmament, devoted to nonproliferation capacity-building in support of UNSCR 1540 Implementation. USDEL worked over the past year to accommodate Indonesian concerns about how this ISM would approach disarmament. During that time Pakistan raised no

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objections and, indeed, twice indicated to USDEL that it supported the proposal. Nonetheless, Pakistan objected to the proposal at the May 9 ARF Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on grounds similar to those just resolved with Indonesia. Pakistan's proposed changes would create an inappropriate focus on nuclear disarmament at the expense of nonproliferation work. Pakistan's comments would also exceed the mandate of ARF by calling for the renegotiation of UNSCR 1540. The Singapore Chair reproached Pakistan for providing, at the last minute, fundamental changes to a proposal that had received broad support after careful negotiation. Singapore also expressed the view that the proposal was of great importance to the ARF and ASEAN participants (ref C). USDEL gave Pakistan a revised version of the text of the concept paper incorporating some, but not all, of their comments. The Department has not received any feedback from Pakistan on the acceptability of the new text. Additionally, Pakistan has made comments on the U.S. proposal for an ARF Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Workplan regarding a section of the document devoted to bioterrorism and biosecurity. The United States has incorporated many of their comments, but has also not received feedback from Pakistan on the acceptability of the new text. Both documents and Pakistan's original comments have been sent to post via ref B along with additional background.

POINT OF CONTACT AND REPORTING DEADLINE

¶7. POC: Please contact EAP/RSP Kevin Sheives at (202) 647-1217 or ISN/RA Charles Mahaffey at (202-647-6220) for any necessary, further background information or argumentation to meet these objectives.

¶8. REPORTING DEADLINE: Department requests post report back by July 16 or before appropriate host government officials leave for the July 17-24 ASEAN and ARF Ministerial Meetings in Singapore.
RICE